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THREE DAYS REIGN OF TERROR,

— OR —

The July Riots

in 1863,

IN NEW YORK.

by
Ellen Leonard



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OR
THE JULY RIOTS IN 1863,
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FROM HARPER'S MAGAZINE, JANUARY, 1867.

On the tenth of July, 1863, my mother and myself arrived in the city of New York. We had set out on a grand tour of visitation. After vegetating year after year in a New England village, we had sallied forth in genuine country fashion to hunt up our kinsfolk in various parts of the land. We were in no hurry. We had the whole summer before us. We wished to avoid crowds, noise, and excitement, to stop whenever we pleased, as long as we chose, and have a slow, old-fashioned, socialable, sensible journey. Thus far our tranquil visions had been more than realized. For three weeks we had been loitering placidly along our way, and nothing had occurred to mar our tranquility. We hoped now to spend a few days quietly with brother J., call on various friends and relatives, visit Central Park and a lion or so, shop a little, and move onward at our leisure.

But man proposes and Fate *disposes*, and nothing in New York turned out as we expected. Instead of visiting our friends and meandering leisurely about the city, we were caught in a mob and penned up in our first stopping place. From the first moment of our arrival everything went wrong. J. did not meet us at the boat as he had promised, and we had to find our way without him in a drizzling rain. The streets were dark, dirty, and crowded with ill-looking people. The whole city was enveloped in a fog and gloom. The home regiments had gone to drive the rebels from Pennsylvania, and many hearts were trembling. The household which received us had its full share of anxiety. Its youngest member, a

youth of seventeen, had gone with the volunteers, and other friends were in the Army of the Potomac. The disappointing brother, too, was employed on a sad mission, helping a friend to Gettysburg to find the body of a slain brother; so that within doors we found it as dismal as without, and our first impressions of the great city were any thing but cheering.

Our prospect was limited to two rows of brick houses and a broad expanse of house-roofs from our room in the upper story. "Nobody was in town," but the streets were jammed with carts and children, and the noise and clatter were incessant and deafening. The weather continued most oppressive. Low, dingy clouds possessed the sky, and not a breath of fresh air was attainable. I thought New York a most detestable summer residence, and resolved to leave it as soon as possible.

On the third morning of our sojourn, however, the sky brightened. The sun attempted to shine, and the papers brought good tidings. Lee was retreating, Meade pursuing, the Potomac rising, and our spirits rose with it. At breakfast Central Park was moved and carried by acclamation; but soon some pattering rain-drops brought out an opposition, which induced us to defer our jaunt till settled weather. So we scattered in various directions—J. down town, and I to Broadway. But even there I could see nothing attractive. Every thing looked hot, glaring, and artificial, and every body looked shabby, jaded, and care-worn. An overworked horse dropped dead in the street before me, and I was glad to take refuge for a time in the Astor Library.

Returning thence at mid-day I first saw signs of disturbance. A squad of policemen passed before me into Third Avenue, clerks were looking eagerly from the doors, and men whispering in knots all up and down the street; but I was too much a stranger to be certain that these appearances were unusual though they annoyed me so much that I crossed at once to Second Avenue, along which I pursued my way peacefully, and once at home thought no more of it. We were indulging ourselves in siestas after our noonday lunch, when a great

roaring suddenly burst upon our ears - a howling as of thousands of wild Indians let loose at once; and before we could look out or collect our thoughts at all the cry arose from every quarter, "The mob! the mob!" "The Irish have risen to resist the draft!"

In a second my head was out the window, and I saw it with my own eyes. We were on a cross-street between First and Second Avenues. First Avenue was crowded as far as we could see it with thousands of infuriated creatures, yelling, screaming, and swearing in the most frantic manner; while crowds of women, equally ferocious, were leaning from every door and window, swinging aprons and handkerchiefs, and cheering and urging them onward. The rush and roar grew every moment more terrific. Up came fresh hordes faster and more furious; bareheaded men, with red, swollen faces, brandishing sticks and clubs, or carrying heavy poles and beams; and boys, women, and children hurrying on and joining with them in this mad chase up the avenue like a company of raging fiends. In the hurry and tumult it was impossible to distinguish individuals, but all seemed possessed alike with savage hate and fury. The most dreadful rumors flew through the street, and we heard from various sources the events of the morning. The draft had been resisted, buildings burned, twenty policemen killed, and the remainder utterly routed and discomfited; the soldiers were absent, and the mob triumphant and increasing in numbers and violence every moment.

Our neighborhood was in the greatest excitement. The whole population turned out at once, gazing with terror and consternation on the living stream passing before them, surging in countless numbers through the avenue, and hurrying up town to join those already in action. Fresh yells and shouts announced the union of forces, and bursting flames their accelerated strength and fury. The armory on Twenty-second street was broken open, sacked, and fired, and the smoke and flames rolled up directly behind us.

With breathless interest we watched their rapid progress till diverted by a new terror. Our own household had been

invaded. My brother's wife was gone: no one knew whither. Above and below we looked in vain for her. We could only learn that a note had been brought to her just before her disappearance. What could have happened? At such times imagination is swift and mystery unsupportable. We were falling into a terrible panic, and devising all manner of desperate expedients, when the wanderer appeared, looking very heroic, accompanied by J., all bloody and wounded. He had been attacked by the mob while passing a little too near them, knocked down, terribly beaten, and robbed of watch and pocketbook. Reality for once had outstripped imagination. For a time all our attention was absorbed in him. The wounds, though numerous, were happily not of a dangerous character. The gang which attacked him, attracted by his little tri-colored badge of loyalty, were fortunately only armed with light fence pickets: so that from loss of blood, and badly cut and bruised in head, limbs, and body, no serious consequences seemed likely to result from his injuries.

Outdoors, meanwhile, all was clamor and tumult. Bells were tolling in every quarter. The rioters were still howling in Twenty-second street, and driving the firemen from the burning armory. The building fell and the flames sunk, and then darkness came all at once and shut out every thing. We gather gloomily around my brother in the back-parlor. An evening paper was procured, but brought no comfort. It only showed more clearly the nature and extent of this fearful outbreak. It only told us that the whole city was as helpless and anxious as ourselves. Many were in far greater danger, for obscurity is sometimes safety; but the black, lowering night, and the disabled condition of our only male protector, oppressed us heavily. Our neighborhood was all alive. Men tramped incessantly through the street, and women chatted and scolded in the windows; children cried and cats squalled; a crazy man in the rear raved fiercely for Jeff Davis and the Southern Confederacy; but over every other sound every few moments the bell rang out the alarm of some new fire. Some were very near; some at a distance. We would start and count the district, and tremble for the *Tribune* or the Arsenal.

Thus passed the eve, till at last we separated and tried to compose ourselves to rest; but who could sleep with such terrors around them? That fiery mass of frenzied creatures which had passed so near us in the afternoon was raging somewhere in the city, and that frightful roar and rush might any moment burst again upon our ears. They might sweep through our street and scatter every thing before them. Fires kindled by them illumined many parts of the city.

As the clocks struck twelve a great shout startled me, and a light flamed up before me. A huge bonfire had been kindled in the middle of the street not far below us. Wild forms were dancing about it, and piling on fresh fuel. Great logs and beams and other combustibles were dragged up and heaped upon it. Sleep, now, was of course impossible. From a seat in an upper window I saw it rise and fall, flame up and fade. Was it a plaything or a signal? In either case I dared not leave it. A gang of noisy boys gathered around it. "Bring out Horace Greely!" one was called. At last, after two hours' watching and wondering, a heavy shower put out the fires and drove the rioters homeward. Dark figures slunk to darker lanes and hovels, and rest and quiet fell on the distracted city.

At break of day it roused again. Another cloudy, foggy, warm, oppressive morning. Very early I resumed my post of observation. A black, charred mound loomed up below, and cinders, smoke, and soot filled the air and encrusted every object. Rough-looking men were already astir. A car passed down the avenue crowded inside and out; another passed; another, and no more. No rattling carts were heard, no shrieking milkmen. All ordinary sights and sounds were missing. Soon hordes of ragged children attacked the heap of rubbish in the street. Little fair-haired girls and toddling boys bore off great armfuls of sticks and brands. Meanwhile the larger children, great boys, grown women, had hurried off to the smoking ruins in Twenty-second street, and returned laden with spoils. Charred beams, baskets of coal, iron rails, muskets, and market-barrels were carried by in vast quantities. The "dangerous classes" were evidently wide awake.

Our household meanwhile bestirred itself slowly. J. had rested little, but was free from fever or any alarming symptoms. Much time was spent in dressing his wounds, and some in preparing breakfast. There was no milk, no ice to be had, and meat and bread were on the wane; and so I ventured out with my sister H. for supplies. We found our street full of people, excitement, and rumors. Men and boys ran past us with muskets in their hands. We heard that a fight was in progress above Twenty-second street. The mob had seized a gun-factory and many muskets; but the police had driven them off and taken back part of their plunder. It was cheering to find that the police were still alive. Second Avenue was densely thronged, but no cars were running. A great crowd surrounded the ruins of the Armory and blackened the Twenty-second street crossing. Men talked in low, excited tones, and seemed afraid of each other. The stores were mostly closed and business suspended. With difficulty we procured supplies of provisions and a newspaper; but percussion caps and ammunition were stoutly denied us. No one dared to admit that they kept any such articles lest the rioters should take them away by force. A friendly bookseller at last supplied us. He had been out in disguise, he said, and heard the rioters boasting among themselves. One said he had made a hundred dollars already, and now he had arms and meant to use them. All the shops on the avenue had been threatened. The mob were gathering in great force in our vicinity, and things looked every moment more threatening; so we hurried home as fast as possible, and I took my post again at the window.

New and strange sights met my eyes. Such multitudes of people every where: filling street and sidewalks, crowding all the doors and windows, the balconies and roofs of the houses. Many were merely spectators, some not far distant were *actors*. In the First avenue the crowd was now very dense and clamorous. The liquor store on the corner was thronged with villainous-looking customers, and the women who had welcomed the mob on their first appearance were

again talking loudly as if urging them on to action. "Die at home!" was the favorite watch-word which often reached our ears. Every thing indicated that a collision was approaching. We caught, after a time, a glimpse of soldiers, and heard the welcome rattle of musketry, distant at first, then nearer and nearer. The soldiers marched to and through Twenty-second street and turned down First avenue. The mob yelled and howled and stood their ground. Women from the roofs threw stones and brickbats upon the soldiers. Then came the volleys; the balls leaped out and the mob gave way at once and fled in every direction. A great crowd rushed through our street, hiding in every nook and corner. We closed doors and blinds, but still peeped out of the windows. The soldiers marched slowly back up the avenue, firing along the way; crossed over into Second avenue, marched down opposite our street and fired again. Again the mob scattered, and scampered in droves through the street. Yet another volley, and balls came tearing down the centre of our street right before us, dashing along the pavements and carrying off frames from the trees. A boy on the sidewalk opposite was struck: he fell in a pool of blood, and was carried away to die. The streets were now cleared, the crowds had vanished, the soldiers withdrew, and the mob was quelled. For two hours peace and quiet prevailed. Our neighbors retired to their several abodes. We took dinner by gas-light with closed blinds, and flattered ourselves that the worst was over.

But as night came on the sun came out, and men crawled out into sight again. A stranger on horseback rode slowly up the street. Crowds quickly gathered around him. Swarms rushed out of the old liquor store and from all the neighboring alleys, and greeted him with shouts and cheers. We saw him waving his hat and haranguing the multitude, and heard their storm of response, but could catch no words. Great bustle and preparation followed. Women were foremost among them, inciting and helping. The rider slunk off eastward as he came, while men formed in bands and marched off down the avenue. A squad of lads, decently clad and armed, marched down our

street end joined those on the corner, were received with loud cheers, and sent on after the others.

The sun set clear, and a beautiful night came on; a radiant midsummer night, but darker to us than the preceding. Dark skies seemed more in harmony with the scenes around us, and the contrast only deepened the gloom. The papers brought no encouragement. Fearful deeds of atrocity were recorded. The mob were increasing in power and audacity, and the city was still paralyzed and panic struck. The small military force available could only protect a few important positions, leaving the greater part defenceless. Our inflammable neighborhood was wholly at the mercy of the mob. Again with heavy hearts we assembled in the back-parlor and discussed probabilities and contingencies. Our position on the very edge of one of the worst of the "infected districts" had in it, after all, one element of security; the mob could not touch us without endangering some of their friends. The incessant din and clamor without were little calculated to strengthen our courage. The warm, bright night set every evil thing in motion, and man and beast conspired to fill the air with all manner of hideous and discordant sounds. The tramping, scolding, screaming, squalling, and raving of the preceding night were repeated and intensified. Cats and dogs squalled and howled, bells rang incessantly, and mingled with all these sounds came at intervals the most mournful of all, the long-drawn piercing wails of Irishwomen bemoaning their dead.

Worn out with listening we resolved at last to try to rest. I made up a bundle, put my clothes in running order, read the most comforting Psalms I could find, and laid myself down to sleep. Scarcely had my head touched the pillow when a new alarm of fire sounded. Lights streamed through the door of my room and illumined the houses opposite. "Another fire in Twenty-second Street!" was the cry. The police station had been set on fire, and volumes of smoke and flame were rising again very near us. From the rear window we saw it all with the utmost distinctness; heard the roaring and crackling, and felt the heat of the flames. Soon they wrappid the house and

caught the adjacent fire-tower, whose bell was clamoring even now for aid. The mob yelled with delight, and drove off the eager firemen. The flames soon wreathed the tower and rose in majestic columns. The whole neighborhood was flooded with light. Thousands of spectators gazed upon the scene, crowning the housetops as with statues of living fire. The blazing turret shook and reeled, beams snapped and parted, and the bell plunged heavily downward, "tolling the death-knell of its own decease;" but its dying notes were lost in the triumphant shouts of the mob maddened by their success. We heard them hurrying on to the gas-works, leaving the waning fires at last to the firemen. We could hear them pounding and shaking the gates, swearing at their inability to force them, and then rushing off again for some easier prey.

The fires were now quite subdued, and we ventured to return to our several rooms. It was past midnight, but the city was still wide awake. The streets were thronged, and the opposite houses were all open and brilliantly lighted. They belonged to the better class of tenement houses, and their occupants, though not themselves rioters, so far sympathized with them as evidently to feel no fear of them. Many were chatting at this time about the doors and windows with a careless merriment which I could not but envy. I gave a parting look up and down the street, and again sought my pillow. The tramping in the street gradually subsided, the din and discord slowly died away, and a slight stupor was stealing gently over me, when a sudden rush and scream brought me again in an instant to my window. There was a spring and a chase, and then such piercing, thrilling cries as words cannot describe. I could see nothing. Not a person was in sight; but from the vicinity of that wretched liquor store I distinctly heard dreadful cries, and caught these broken words: "Oh, brothers! brothers! Save me! save me!"

The sounds thrilled through the opposite and nearer houses. Lights quivered and wavered, and doors were shut hastily. The cries and groans continued. There were confused sounds as of dragging and lifting, and then silence. A

mist had veiled the stars, and darkness fallen upon the street. Our noisy neighbors were struck dumb. Every door and window was closed, and every light extinguished. I trembled from head to foot, and could scarcely grope my way to the back chamber. Part of our household were still watching there, more bells were tolling, and three new fires were raging. Destruction and death were on every side.

Again I returned to my old position in the window, and peered out into the darkness. All things looked ghostly and ghastly. The houses opposite were dissolved in mist. I seemed to see through them far down into the heart of the city, and heard in the distance the roar as of great multitudes in commotion. What was passing I could not tell, but any thing and every thing seemed possible at this hour. Would the night ever end, or any thing be left should morning come? Once only the welcome report of musketry reached my ears. At last the glimmering of dawn appeared. The mist dissolved; the wandering house came back to position; the street resumed its old familiar look, and men and boys their ceaseless tramp, tramp, tramp.

One of these men stopped across the way, and said, in a low, scared tone to some one in the house: "They hung a Massachusetts——over there last night." One word was lost to me—what it was I can only conjecture: but whether citizen, soldier, or negro, I do not doubt that some poor fellow very near us met the fate of so many others in those day of terror: and though his name and story may never be known on earth, his cries for help will surely rise up in judgment against his murderers.

But another day had come, Wednesday, July 15th. A long, bright, blazing midsummer day was before us. There was little change in the aspect of affairs without. The city was not all burned down, we found. The newspapers were still alive, and insisting that more troops were on hand and the mob checked; but we saw no signs of it. The morning indeed passed more quietly. The rioters were resting from the labors of the night; but business was not resumed, and

swarms of idle men still hung about the streets and stores. No cars were running in the avenues, no carts in the streets. No milkman came, and no meatmen, and not a soldier or policeman showed his head.

The day dragged on heavily. There was little to be seen, and nothing to be done but write letters that could not be sent, and wonder at our situation. Little had we thought that our quiet pilgrimage would lead us to such turbulent and tempestuous scenes. All our plans had been brought to nought. Visiting, shopping, sight-seeing, were not even to be considered. All ordinary pursuits, and pleasures had ceased, social intercourse was given up, and nothing remained but chaos and confusion. We heard but the vaguest reports of the doings of the city, and still less of the outer world. The war at the door drowned the battle afar off.

It was most humiliating, it was almost incredible, that such a state of things should exist in the heart of a civilized and Christian community. "Was this your joyous city, whose merchants were princes, whose traffickers were among the honorable of the earth?" Could it be that this great city, the pride and boast of the nation, was trampled down and held under the feet of these mad rioters? She seemed utterly prostrate and helpless. Her vast treasures, her immense store-houses, her long lines of palaces, her great multitudes of citizens, were bound and offered up for sacrifice. The whole nation was trampling and terror struck. No one could see when and where it would terminate.

Flight seemed the only refuge. Could not we, wearied travelers, at least steal away to some green nook and be at rest? We discussed plans and dismissed them. Nothing seemed feasible. There were no cars and no carriages, and no one to help us to them. J., though improving, was still unable to go out, and we were unwilling to leave him and his family in such circumstances. We were bound, hand and foot, in this miserable neighborhood, unable to stir out of doors, and with the prospect of another night of horrors.

The day, though quieter than the proceeding, was far more irksome. The brick walls and glaring streets, the heat, confusion, and confinement were intolerably wearisome. The sun blazed more and more fiercely. The stillness was oppressive and ominous. It seemed the calm before a storm. Already clouds were gathering in the horizon. As night approached we heard drums beating, and gangs of rioters marched up their favorite avenue. The whole population bestirred itself at once. Men, women, and children rushed out cheering and clamoring, some hurrying on with the crowd, some hanging around the corner. Many soon returned, laden with spoil—bedding, clothing, and furniture. The crowd increased rapidly in the street and around the liquor store. Great excitement prevailed. There was loud talking with fierce gestures. Some ran thither with fire arms, some with poles and boards. Then some one shouted, "They are coming!" and a small band of soldiers appeared marching up our street. The mob seemed to swell into vast dimensions, and densely filled the whole street before them. Hundreds hurried out on the house-tops, tore up brickbats, and hurled them with savage howls at the approaching soldiers. Shots were fired from secret ambushes, and soldiers fell before they had fired. Then they charged bravely into the mob, but their force was wholly inadequate. A fierce conflict raged before our eyes. With breathless interest we watched them from door and windows. We feared the soldiers would be swallowed up and annihilated. Some now appeared in sight with a wounded officer, (General E. Jardine, New York,) and several wounded men, looking from side to side for shelter. Their eyes met ours with mute appeal. There was no time to be lost; the mob might any moment be upon them. There was a moment's consultation, a hasty reference to J., an unhesitating response: "Yes, by all means;" we beckened them in, and in they came. Doors and windows were at once closed, and the house became a hospital, and seemed filled with armed men. The wounded men were carried into my brother's room; the Colonel was laid on the bed, and the others propped up with pillows. There were a few moments of great commotion and confusion. We

flew for fans, ice water, and bandages. Some of the soldiers went out into the fight again, and some remained with the wounded. Dr. J. P. P. White, New York, a surgeon, who had volunteered as a private under his old commander, dressed the wounds of the sufferers. The Colonel was severally wounded in the thigh by a slug made of a piece of lead pipe, producing a compound fracture. The wounds of two others, though less dangerous, were severe and painful.

Twilight was now upon us, and night rapidly approaching. The soldiers had been forced to retreat, leaving the mob in great force and fury. We heard them shouting and raving on the corner, and knew that we were in great danger. Already they were clamoring for the wounded soldiers who had escaped them. We thought of Colonel O'Brien's fate, and could not suppress the thought that our own house might be made the scene of a like tragedy. Could we defend ourselves if attacked? A hurried consultation was held. We had arms and ammunition, and, including J. and the slightly wounded soldiers, half a dozen men able and willing to use them. But we could not "man our lines." We were open to attack at once from the front and rear, the roof, the front basement, and the balcony above it. We might, indeed, retreat to the upper stories, barricade the stairway, and hold it against all the assailants that could crowd into the hall. But if they chose to fire the house below we could not prevent it, and then there would be no escape either for our wounded or ourselves.

The Colonel promptly decided the question; resistance was hopeless, could only make the case worse, and must not be attempted. Not only so, but all signs of the presence of soldiers must be removed. Arms, military apparel, and bloody clothing were accordingly concealed. The Colonel was conveyed to the cellar and placed on a mattress. The young soldier, next to him most severely wounded, was assisted up to the rear apartment on the upper floor and placed in charge of my mother and myself. The soldiers who had remained were then ordered to make their escape from the house as they best could, and to hasten to headquarters with

an urgent request that a force might be sent to our relief. The surgeon was also requested to go, but would not listen to the suggestion. He had been regimental surgeon for two years under the Colonel, and insisted on remaining by his side, to take care of him, and to share his fate whatever it might be. He took his post, therefore, in the cellar, extemporizing as well as he could some scanty means of concealment for both from the boxes and bins which it contained. The remaining soldier, though severely wounded in the foot, could yet walk with pain and difficulty; and it was decided that, as soon as it should be safe or necessary, he should try the chances of escape through the scuttle and over the roofs of the adjoining buildings.

J., with his bandaged head and disabled arm, was liable to be taken for a wounded soldier, and his wife and her sister, Mrs. P——, insisted that he also should betake himself to the roof. He could render no material assistance if he remained; on the other hand, his presence might precipitate a scene of violence which would not be offered to ladies alone. They did not feel that they were personally in danger—so far there was no report that the lawless violence of the rioters had been directed against women; and if he could get away he might be the means of bringing speedier relief. Very reluctantly he yielded to these considerations, and prepared to accompany the wounded soldier. The mother of the household took refuge in her room on the second floor. To her daughter-in-law, wife of an absent son, was assigned a post of observation at a front window. The two heroic women, H. and her sister, remained below to confront the mob.

Of all these arrangements, made mostly after we had assumed the charge assigned us we at the time knew nothing. In utter darkness and desolation we sat above by the bedside of our soldier, receiving his farewell messages for his mother and friends, and knowing not how soon he might be torn from us. There was no human power to help us in this extremity; we could only trust in Him “who stilleth the madness of the people.” The suspense was terrible. In the rear, as we stole

an occasional look-out through our closed blinds, we could see men here and there climbing the fences; they might be rioters breaking out. All was confusion and uncertainty. We knew not friends from foes.

In front the demonstrations were still more alarming. The rioters had taken possession of the street, stationed a guard on both avenues, and were chasing up and down for the soldiers. Then they were seen searching from house to house; beginning, fortunately for us and ours, on the opposite side, proceeding toward Second Avenue, then crossing the street and coming back gradually toward us. At last they reached house next to ours. A few moments we waited in breathless silence. Then came a rush up the steps, and the bell rang violently. Not a sound was heard through the house. Again and yet again the bell rang, more and more furiously. Heart throbbed, nerves quivered, but no one stirred. Then came knocks, blows, kicks, threats, attempts to force the door. Come in they must and would nothing could stay them.

Having gained for the retreating party all the time she could, Mrs. P—— at length unlocked the door, opened it, passed out, and closing it behind her, stood face to face with the mob, which crowded the steps and swarmed on the sidewalk and the adjacent street. What could she do? She knew that they would come in, that they would search the house, that they would find the men; but she was determined not to give them up without an effort to save them. Possibly, in parleying with them, she might at least calm somewhat the fury of the passion that swayed that howling mob; possibly in that brutal and maddened throng there might be a few human hearts in their bosoms to which she might find a way, win them to her side, and enlist their aid in saving the lives of the intended victims. That was her only hope.

"What do you want?" she asked, while the air was yet ringing with the cry that came up from the crowd, "The soldiers! the soldiers?" "Bring out the soldiers!" One who stood near and seemed to be a leader, replied, "There were two soldiers went into this house, and we must have them. You must give them up."

"There *were* two that came in, but went out again. They are not here now."

She spoke in a low but perfectly clear and steady voice, that compelled attention, and the crowd hushed its ravings to catch her words.

"Let us see; if they are not here we will not harm you; but we must search the house."

"We can not let you in: there are only women here - some that are old and feeble, and the sight of such a crowd will frighten them to death."

"They shall not all come in," was the reply; and after some further parley it was agreed that half a dozen only should enter and make the search. The leader gave his orders, the door was opened, and the men detailed came in; but before it could be closed the mob surged up, pressed in, and filled the hall. Many of them were armed with the stolen carbines.

"Light the gas!" was the cry.

"My sister has gone for a light."

It came, and the parley was renewed. The leader again demanded the soldiers: insisted that they were there, and said it would be better for themselves if they would give them up. She persisted in the statement she had made.

"She is fooling us, and using up the time while they are getting away by the roof!" cried one, and pressing forward with his musket pointed at her, endeavored to pass her. Very deliberately she took hold of the muzzle and turned it aside, saying, "Don't do that. You know I am a woman and it might frighten me."

The leader returned to the charge. "We know the men are here, and if you give them up to us you shall not be harmed. But if you do not and we find them, you know what a mob is. I cannot control them; your house will be burned over your heads, and I will not guarantee your lives for five minutes."

"You will not do that," was the reply. "We are not the

kind of people whose houses you wish to burn. My only son works as you do, and perhaps in the same shop with some of you, for seventy cents a day."

She did not tell them that her amateur apprentice boy had left his place to go to Pennsylvania and fight their friends the rebels. A young man, whom she had noticed as one of the few of decent appearance, stepped to her side and whispered to her, advising her compliance with the demand, assuring her that the men could not be controlled. The tone more than the words indicated to her that she had made one friend; and she found another, in the same way, a moment later.

Meantime the leaders were consulting whether they should go first above or below, and decided on the latter. Stationing one man with a musket at the door, and one at the stairs, they proceeded, pioneered by H., first to the parlors, and then to the basement, thoroughly examining both. Most fortunately the sentinals were the two young men in whom Mrs. P——felt she had found friends, and she was not slow to improve the opportunity to deepen the impression she had made. But now the crowd outside, thundering at the basement door, burst in the panels, and forcing it open, with terrible oaths and threats rushed in and filled the lower hall. Part joined the searching party, and some hurried up the first floor. One, crowding past the sentinal, was striding up the stairs. We heard his call to his comrades, "Come on up stairs!" and our hearts sank within us. But the sentinel's stern command, enforced by his leveled piece, brought him back.

The main party, having ransacked the basement rooms, now turned to the cellar. In a moment a loud shout announced that they had found a victim. The surgeon was dragged up, forced out at the lower door, and delivered over to the crowd outside. A blow from a bludgeon or musket felled him to the earth, inflicting a terrible wound on the head. "Hang him, hang him!" "To the post at the Twenty-second Street corner!" were the cries as they hurried him off.

The search within proceeded; a moment more and they had found the Colonel. A new and fiercer shout was sent up. An order from a leader thrilled through the hall, "Come down here some of yees wid yer muskets!"

At the first cry from the cellar Mrs. P——sprung for the basement, intending to make her way at any hazard; a sentinel stood at the head of the stairway; a stalwar brute, reeking with filth and whiskey. He seized her, with both arms about her waist, with a purpose of violence quite too evident. She struggled to free herself without raising an alarm, but in vain; then a sudden and piercing shriek, which rung through the house, made him for an instant relax his hold, and, wrenching herself away, she hurried back and sought the protection of the friendly sentinel.

"He will not let me pass; I must go down."

"You must not," he replied; "it is no place for you." And then he added, looking sternly at her, "You have deceived us. You said there was no one here, and there is."

"I would have done the same thing for you if you had been wounded. Look at me; do you not believe me?"

He did look, full in her eye, for an instant; then said: "Yes, I do believe it. You have done right, and I admire your spirit."

"But I must go down. Go with me."

"No; it is no place for you."

"Then go yourself and save his life."

And turning over his charge to the sentinel at the door, he did go. Meantime the searching party, having found the Colonel, proceeded to question him. He said he was a citizen, accidentally wounded, and had been obliged to seek refuge there.

"Why did you hide, if you are a citizen?"

Because, he said, he was afraid he should be taken for a soldier. They would not believe, but still he insisted on his statement. Then the muskets were sent for, and four pieces leveled at his head, as he lay prostrate and helpless.

"Fire, then, if you will, on a wounded man and a citizen."

I shall die, any how, for my wound is a mortal one. But before you fire I wish you would sent for a priest."

"What, are you a Catholik?"

"Yes."

This staggered them; and while they were hesitating the sentinel joined the group, and as soon as he looked on the Colonel exclaimed! "I know that man. I used to go to school with him. He is no soldier."

This turned the scale. The leaders were satisfied, and decided to let him go. But before leaving him they rifled his pockets; and here he narrowly escaped falling into renewed danger. While the parley was in progress his fingers had been busily occupied in quietly and coolly removing from his pocket a quantity of bullets which he had forgotten, and which, if they had been found, would certainly betrayed him.

Those of the mob who had remained above, disappointed of their prey, with oaths and execrations protested against the action of their leaders, and sent the ruffian at the head of the stairway down to see if it was all right. But the positive statements of the friendly sentinel, which Mrs. P——had the satisfaction of hearing him rehearse, as the two met in the lower hall, disarmed even his suspicions, and the rest could do no otherwise than acquiesce. So well satisfied, indeed, were the leaders, and, as it is not unreasonable to suppose, so impressed with the resolute bearing of the two ladies, that they volunteered to station a guard before the door to prevent the annoyance of any further search. As they had found the two men who had been reported to them as having entered the house, it did not seem to occur to them that there might be still others concealed; and so they took their departure, leaving the upper stories unvisited.

The surgeon in the meantime had been no less fortunate. In the crowd which hurried him off to death there happened to be one or two returned soldiers who had served in the same regiment with him, and when he came where it was light recognized him. They insisted on saving him, and, raising a party in their favor, finally prevailed, and having rescued him escorted him in safety to his home.

While these events were passing below our alarm and anxiety were beyond all expression. Our poor charge especially was in the greatest distress; ignorant of the fate of his Colonel and comrades, and apprehending every moment that he might himself be found and dragged out by the mob. Of course we knew but imperfectly at the time of it what was going on. We knew that the soldiers were in the house, and that men bent on their destruction were seeking for them. We heard the clamor without, the cry for "The soldiers!" the rush into the hall. Then we heard the calm, steady tone of the ladies, holding the mob in listening attention, and took courage. We heard the movement through the parlors and downward to the basement. Then came the irruption of the fierce crowd into the lower hall; and very soon loud cries from below told us that some one was found. It might be the surgeon or the Colonel; it might be my brother, for we did not then know that he had effected his escape.

Again came up screams from below, ejaculations, loud words. Could it be that another was found? Again the heavy tramp of many men, this time moving upward and talking eagerly and rapidly. They paused in the hall; we dared not move or breathe; would they come up the stairs? No! The door is opened, men pass out, it is closed after them, and all is silent. Have they gone for others to complete the search, or to murder those already carried out?

Venturing at last below, as the stillness continued, I learned how favorable a turn affairs had taken. But though relieved for the moment, we were still in great anxiety, and in not a little peril. No one knew certainly what had become of J. The Colonel was greatly in need of immediate surgical attendance, and removal from the damp, chilly cellar. Our poor young soldier, too, was suffering much, both in mind and body. He was a volunteer of a day's service only, and his first experience of civil war was very painful. The rioters might learn or suspect that they had been deceived; and return to the search. He could bear to be shot in open fight, but not to be so hunted down. Help seemed to him impossible. The whole military force in the city, he knew, was already detailed

on special duty, and none could be spared for us. If the rioters should come again nothing could save him: any further attempt at concealment would be worse than useless, and flight in his condition was impossible. We tried our best to cheer him, and to wait in patience, trusting to Him who had thus far kept us in safety. The weary hours dragged heavily onward. My mother and myself still sat in the dark with our young soldier, while the other ladies attended to the Colonel in the cellar.

The continued absence of J. gave us now much uneasiness. What had become of him we could not conjecture. From time to time I looked out from my loop-hole in the front window. All was dark and desolate. Not a light in the opposite houses; not a person in sight but the men stationed before our house by the rioters. These marched back and forth in silence while a large body were carousing about the old liquor stand. "Come on," I heard one call, "and bring eight or ten with you!" They might come on again any moment, maddened with drink and disappointed vengeance. As time went on they grew more and more uproarious, singing, dancing, swearing and yelling.

Anxious and troubled, I wandered from front to rear, now leaning out of the window to catch every movement without, and carrying back reports to my still more anxious and troubled soldier.

It was now, we thought, past midnight. We had no hope of relief: no thought or expectation but of struggling on alone hour after hour of distress and darkness, but as I was listening in my window to some unusually threatening demonstrations from the mob, I heard the distinct clank of a horse's hoof on the pavement. Again and again it sounded, more and more distinctly, and then a measured tread reached my ears, the steady, resolute tramp of a trained and disciplined body. No music was ever half so beautiful! It might it must be, our soldiers! Off I flew to spread the good news through the household, and back again to the window to hear the tramp nearer and fuller and stronger, and see a long line of muskets gleam out from the darkness, and a stalwart body of men stop

at our door. "Halt!" was cried; and I rushed down stairs headlong, unlocked the door without waiting for orders, and with tears of joy and gratitude which every one can imagine and nobody describe, welcomed a band of radiant soldiers and policemen, and in the midst of them all who should appear but my brother, pale and exhausted, who had gotten to the house-top in some mysterious way and brought this gallant company to our rescue.

There was no time for inquiries or felicitations. The wounded men were our first care. Our young soldier in his delight had hobbled to the stairway, and was borne down in triumph by his sympathizing comrades, while a larger company brought the Colonel from the cellar. A pitiful sight he was all bleeding and ghastly, shivering with cold and suffering great pain. Both soldiers were placed carefully in the carriage brought for their conveyance, and then we ladies were requested to accompany them immediately. It was unsafe to remain in the house; soldiers could not be spared to protect it, and it was best for us to go at once to the Central Police Station.

There was no time for deliberation or preparation, with two wounded men waiting. My mother was stowed away in a corner of the carriage, the other mother of the household perched up with the driver, and the remainder straggled along with my brother in various stages of dilapidation--some without bonnets, and some without shawls, and some in the thinnest of muslins and slippers. My own clothes were locked up and the keys unattainable; so I snatched what I could and ran with the others. Our military escort soon brought us into subordination. While we had been preparing, one of the two companies had been fighting, and had utterly dispersed the mob on the corner; but this we had hardly noticed, so intently had we been occupied. They were now ready to resume their march. We were formed into column with the utmost formality and precision. One piece of artillery and one company of infantry preceded, and another of each followed the carriage, marching slowly and majestically along the middle of the street; while we ladies moved as slowly along the sidewalks, surrounded by officers, policemen, and newspaper reporters.

The change was so sudden, so unexpected, so magical, that it was difficult to believe that we were really in the body. We, who had been so lately in the depths of darkness and desolation, were now encompassed by armed bands eager to help and serve us. Dangers, seen and unseen, were still around us; great fires illumined the southern sky; house, furniture, and clothing were left behind us unprotected, but still we could only exult in the rescue of our haunted soldiers and our own blissful release from suspense and terror. With joyful hearts we followed our martial guard. This midnight flitting was full of romantic interest. The streets were silent and dark, lighted only by distant lurid flames. Slowly and solemnly the long, black procession moved onward down the broad avenue, through narrow and winding streets, stopping only from time to time for water for the wounded soldiers, or to scatter the foes lurking around us. Sometimes the skirmishers in advance charged out into the darkness, sometimes fired down the cross-streets, but no serious interruption occurred; and at last, after a weary march, the steady light of the Central Police Station gladdened our waiting eyes.

All now was life and animation. Well-dressed citizens were hurrying to and fro. Stalwart soldiers lined the street and guarded the steps and entrance, through which we were conducted to an inner apartment, and with much state and ceremony presented to the chieftains of civic power. Three days' experience of anarchy had made us feel the blessedness of lawful restraint, and surely no body of men ever looked so beautiful as these executives of law and government. Such fresh, radiant, energetic, clear-headed, and strong-hearted leaders looked able to conquer all the rioters in the land. Every body was wide awake, dispatches coming and going, messengers flying about in all directions.

We were received with great civility and offered every possible accommodation, but the best attainable were somewhat scanty. The two rooms had each a table, a writing-desk, and a stack of arms, but no sofa or rocking-chair, no chance for napping or lounging. We saw at once that it was no resting-place for us, and after a brief council resolved to follow the

fate of our Colonel; and so, leaving a spot which shines brightly in my remembrance, we continued our march to St. Nicholas Hotel, obtained admittance, ascended four flights of stairs, parted with our kind and gentlemanly escort, and sat down to rest at half past two Thursday morning.

Sleep was of course still impossible. The exciting scenes of the night, and the incessant roar and rumble of Broadway, all awake; and at four o'clock loud cheers brought us to the window to see the glorious returning "Seventh" marshaled before us, and with all our hearts and voices we joined in the welcome which greeted them. A brighter morning dawned upon the city: other regiments had arrived in the night, and we knew that it was now safe. Broadway was busy and noisy. Business was resumed, and the mob much subdued, though still rampant in our old neighborhood. A reconnoissance showed that it was still unsafe to venture there. We passed the morning comparing notes and considering what to do with ourselves. My only desire was to quit the city—to beat a retreat as soon as possible. Our quiet tour had been rudely interrupted, our plans and purposes brought to naught; we had suffered great fatigue and anxiety, and we were unwilling to stay a moment longer. It was humiliating to leave our luggage in the enemy's country; but what were clothes to rest and quiet? A place for our heads was of more consequence than *bonnets!* Our friends were compelled to stay, but we could go; and most happy were we, now that we were sure of their safety, to improve that privilege. And so, at three o'clock on Thursday afternoon, just three days from our first glimpse of the rioters, we shook the dust of New York from our slippers, and, trunks and bonnetless, sped up North River.



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Gen. Jackson